Case Study Analysis- Number 2

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**Step #1 – Presenting the Facts – I O**

This case study is about a bright young girl, Jane Chavez, who is eleven years old. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Chavez, find their growing child to be the perfect child. Both of her parents are extremely involved in her life, Mrs. Chavez is actually running for president of the Parent-Teacher Association with the full support of her husband. Jane is in Mrs. Thomas’ sixth-grade classroom and Mrs. Thomas has a reputation for being a teacher of the gifted. Mrs. Thomas’s class every year puts on their rendition of the Charles Dickens’s story, *A Christmas Carol*. However, Mrs. Thomas was having a very hard time trying to decide who should play the very important role of the character, Tiny Tim. Kylie Aims, a very quiet student, would make for a perfect Tiny Tim. Mrs. Thomas had a very tough decision to make. She either did what was right and give the role to someone who fit the part the most, Kylie or she would just give into the pressure Jane’s parents were giving her, and give Jane the role of Tiny Tim. Mrs. Thomas finally made her decision; she gave the role to Kylie because he was exactly right for the part. Once Mrs. Thomas decided to give the role to Kylie, her classroom started to experience things that never happened before. All of the sudden test papers that were displayed on the walls of the classroom wardrobe went missing as soon as they were placed there. Pens and pencils were frequently stolen from student’s schoolbags that were stored in the wardrobe. Kylie’s jacket was torn and marred with black ink, and Jane’s gym shoes were missing. The students didn’t want to leave their bags and jackets in the wardrobe; they started carrying all of their belongings with them. The children started taking sides, they were either on Jane’s side or they were on Kylie’s side as a friend. Never were they on both sides. Finally the problem went as far as it could. Two students claimed that Jane was responsible for everything that was going on, and they claimed she was trying to get back at Kylie for stealing her part as Tiny Tim in the holiday play. Mrs. Thomas was outraged at Jane’s behavior, but she tried to control her anger and outrage. She went to the principal and requested that Jane be put on suspension from school for her behavior. Her reasoning for the suspension was to show her students that Jane’s behavior is being punished and will be stopped. Mrs. Thomas just wanted to restore her classroom to the safe classroom it was before all of these incidences started happening. She wanted to teach Jane a lesson that Jane and her parents would never forget. But will suspending Jane really teach her a lesson? Or will it just give her a day off and her bad behavior may just continue when she returns? She may even be worse because of the suspension. It doesn’t really say if the action that Mrs. Thomas decided to do was successful or unsuccessful, I wish it did. If Jane is really the one causing all of these problems, like the two students claimed she was, then she has a problem with jealousy. Jane needs to realize that things in life, whether it is at home or out in the real world, will not always go the way she wants or expects them to go. Jane needs to understand that she is not always going to get her way, and she cannot lash out like she has been when things do not go the way she plans. Jane needs to learn to be happy for others, and accept when things do not go her way.

**Step #2 – Taking Action - S I E**

Jane is being accused of doing mischievous things in her classroom. This all started after she did not get picked for a part that she and her parents both really wanted her to have in a play. Two students are accusing Jane of being the one causing all the unexplained problems in the classroom. They say she is doing it to get back at the student who did get the part in the play. If this is the case, then Jane needs to work on not being jealous, and learn how to be happy for others when she does not get her way. Jane needs to learn this because her jealousy is causing the classroom to feel unsafe for the students. No one wants to leave their items in the wardrobe anymore, they fear their items are going to be damaged or stolen. If Jane is truly the one misbehaving, then she must be stopped. Mrs. Thomas wants to suspend Jane, but will that really work? Suspending Jane is just giving her a free day to stay at home and not do any school work. It is not really dealing with the problem at hand.

The first thing to do with Jane is to never let her be alone in the classroom. Mrs. Thomas or another adult should be present in the wardrobe when students are entering. This will put an immediate stop to the incidences that are happening. However, one problem with that idea is that Mrs. Thomas may not have the time to be in the wardrobe when the students are in there, or Mrs. Thomas may not have access to a free adult to help. The next-step actions that Mrs. Thomas could do is to sit down one-on-one with Jane. Mrs. Thomas needs to come to this one-on-one with a positive attitude and talk to Jane and see if something is bothering her. She should not accuse Jane of anything, but simply ask her if she is unhappy with anything going on in the classroom. If that doesn’t work, maybe Mrs. Thomas could ask Jane to help with special things that need to be done in the classroom. This way Jane is feeling that Mrs. Thomas see’s Jane as an important member of the classroom. If Jane feels a positive relationship with her teacher, then she may feel a positive relationship with her classroom and her peers. With that thought, Jane could feel like she is being accused and being attacked.

For a long-term solution, Mrs. Thomas could do one of two things. The first thing she could do would be an incentive for the whole class. She could sit the whole class down and explain that things have been happening in the classroom recently, and she is not sure who is causing these problems. Mrs. Thomas could offer to her class that if at the end of the week everything in the classroom remains untouched and nothing goes missing or gets ruined, then they could have some kind of party for the good behavior. Each week she could offer the class prizes for their good behavior. This way she is not accusing one person in particular. But this could cause some problems, if the class is good except for one person and they are caught, it could make the class want to exclude that person from the party. Rules need to be set for this incentive. However, if Mrs. Thomas has proof that it really is Jane causing the problems, then she could do an individual incentive for Jane. This would require meeting with her parents to discuss what would be the best way to get Jane’s attention. Once she figures out how to promote good behavior out of Jane. She can then offer this incentive to Jane every time she does good, rather then correct her when she does something bad.

Mrs. Thomas would benefit from Jacob Kounin’s model of withitness. “Kounin coined the term "withitness" to describe teachers' knowing what was going on in all areas of the classroom at all times. Kounin determined that this trait is communicated more effectively by teachers' behaviors than by their words, and further, that it is effective only if students are convinced that the teacher really knows what is going on.” (Andrius , 2012) Mrs. Thomas would benefit from Kounin’s model of withitness because she needs to learn to know what is going on in her classroom at all times. If she knows what is going on in her classroom at all times, then maybe she can prevent everything from happening. I believe my plan of action will work for the most part because children love incentives. They love stickers, parties, and they love having the teacher’s attention for a positive reason. Students want the approval of their teacher and once they have that, they want to do good for him or her.

**Step #3 – Reflections on What You Have Learned**

After reading and analyzing this case study, it really hit me that things like this are really going to happen in my classroom some day. I feel as if I really benefited from reading this case study and coming up with an action plan. I actually saw something similar happen like this in my practicum last semester. A student in first grade was stealing things that did not belong to her. She was caught by numerous students, and eventually the teacher even caught her. She was not allowed to be near the lockers or anywhere in the room by herself. Every classroom is going to be different, every student is going to be different. Reading case studies like this, and reading articles, and textbooks are really preparing me for the future.

**References:**

Andrius , J. (2012). *Teachermatters*. Retrieved from http://www.teachermatters.com/classroom-discipline/models-of-discipline/the-kounin-model.html